



**October 2023**

Dear Parents / Carers,

### Headteacher's Update

This term has been an exceptionally busy time in school with our parental journey events allowing our students, parents and carers to understand how to “step up” into their new year group or Key Stage, our main school and sixth form open evenings and our first house assemblies bringing students from Year 7 - 13 together to celebrate the achievements of individuals within their house and the house overall. There has been a fantastic buzz as our students have achieved record numbers of house points with almost 160,000 awarded at the time of writing to you, with our staff team continuing in their efforts to catch the students being good and recognise their excellent effort, attitude, conduct and attainment. Thank you to the students, staff, parents and carers for all of your efforts this term and I hope you have a restful half term break.



### Duke of Edinburgh Awards 2023

Due to reduced staff capacity we are only able to offer the Silver Award to current Y10 students and Gold Awards to those currently in the sixth form this year. The school will revert back to offering the Bronze Award to students in next year's Year 10 cohort so no student will lose out on the opportunity to complete their Bronze Award but the current Y9 will be delayed by one year. After half term we will share more information about a parental information evening when students can sign up to the Silver and Gold Awards.



### Class Charts Student Access

Following on from the announcement of our positive conduct policy earlier this term, we have given each student access to their class charts account. This will allow students to be able to track their behaviour, review their timetable and see their badges when reaching different levels.

### Class Charts Homework Trial - Year 10 Only

Members of staff are currently trialling the homework features of ClassCharts with students in Y10. If you are a parent of a student in Y10 you may notice some notifications regarding homework which you may find useful, but please do not be concerned if you see these pop up.

### Lunchtime Homework Club

Homework remains an important element of our school curriculum and has been [proven to help students make progress](#). On Monday after school we have a very popular study club that aims to assist our students in getting their homework complete or helping them to develop good study and revision habits. Many students access this provision to support them to get their homework done on time and prevent them from receiving warnings or sanctions when it is incomplete. In order to support those students who have to get school transport home on a Monday we are going to offer a homework support session on Tuesday lunchtime in Room 110.

### Pick Up From School

At the moment we have large numbers of parents and carers attempting to pick up students from Station Road at the end of school and this is causing a lot of additional congestion which has, on occasion, blocked the road. Please could I ask parents and carers to be mindful of parking across resident's driveways and turning off engines whilst waiting and, where possible, arrange a pick up point away from the main school entrance.

### Building Works

Our new Drama Studio construction is scheduled to begin over half term. Whilst the main bulk of disruptive work is scheduled for times outside of school we are aware that the building work will mean some restricted movement around our school site and some noise during the school day. We are putting in place measures to try and minimise disruption to learning whilst this project is undertaken, however the time constraints on our Department for Education funding have meant that work will need to take place during term time. We look forward to sharing updates with you as our project progresses and we are hopeful of a grand opening of the block after Easter.



### Uniform and Equipment Clarifications

The school believes that a school uniform is important because it:

- looks smart
- wears well
- is cost effective
- contributes to a sense of belonging
- gives a common purpose
- fosters a feeling of pride
- reduces 'fashion competition' between children
- prepares students well for similar demands in the workplace in future years

In order to maintain high standards of uniform and appearance I wanted to draw your attention to three points from our school uniform policy. The policy can be found on our website or by clicking [this link](#).

**School trousers:** School trousers must be black and full length. We appreciate that the fit of these can be difficult to judge and so slimmer fitting trousers will be allowed, but they must be full length and have the attributes of trousers such as pockets, buttons and zips: we will not accept leggings or jeans material.

**Makeup:** Subtle, natural looking, make-up will be allowed but excessive makeup (including false eyelashes and nails) will not be allowed. Any final decision about the appropriateness of elements of uniform or makeup will be at the discretion of the year leader or members of the senior team. We appreciate your support in ensuring that your child comes to school with the correct uniform and equipment.

**Jewellery:** Earrings are not permitted to be worn. The only piece of jewellery students are allowed to wear is a wrist watch.

It is also important to note that students are expected to bring their equipment in a suitable bag each day. This includes a pencil case, two working black and green pens, two pencils, an eraser, a scientific calculator and ruler, a fully charged chromebook and a water bottle which can be filled in different locations around the school site at break and lunch time. We do not expect students to leave lessons or be late to lessons to collect water.

### Attendance Matters

Maintaining positive attendance is key in enabling your child to be successful in school. The DFE (Department for Education) expects that all children attend school regularly and clarifies that attendance of 96% and above is the expected target. We share your child's attendance with you through Class Charts and you can see this figure update every day. We shared this information with our parents / carers in our recent 'Stepping Up' events and the reasons why maintaining positive attendance is crucial to your child's success both academically and pastorally. We also celebrate your child's success with attendance each



week by awarding house points and in our celebration assemblies. We would like to thank all parents / carers who support us and your child in maintaining positive attendance.

### Parental Journey Events and Parents' Forum

Last year, Deputy Headteacher, Mrs Darbyshire worked collectively with our parent forum, school staff and students to create our seven year parental journey. The journey encompasses all points of contact across the seven years that a student is part of our school community, keeping parents / carers apprised of pertinent information relevant to the stage that their child is at. We were thrilled with the positive feedback we received from our parents / carers last year and over the last half term we have hosted the first five parental journey events for this academic year:

- Stepping into KS3
- Post 18 UCAS and Careers Guidance
- Stepping into KS4
- Y11 Parental Support Evening
- Stepping into KS5

We welcomed over 700 parents / carers of students in Y7, 10, 11, 12 and 13 to these events.

In addition to these events, we were delighted to host our Y6 and Y12 open evenings for main school and the Sixth Form, and to welcome so many of our prospective new students and their families.

If you require any further support with any of these events, please contact [stokesley@arete.uk](mailto:stokesley@arete.uk) and you will be directed to the most appropriate member of the team. If you would like to find out more or join our parent forum, please email [jdarbyshire@stk.arete.uk](mailto:jdarbyshire@stk.arete.uk).



### House Christmas Tree Competition

Throughout November, we are asking the Y7 House Tutor Groups to each design and decorate Christmas trees to take their place at Stokesley Parish Church's Christmas Tree event. They will be on display in the church during December and until Twelfth Night. Each



tutor group will create their own plans for decorating their tree and then form teams will do this over the next few weeks.

That's where we hope your support will be able to come in: obviously this means we will need to fund the purchase of 7 trees and get hold of 7 stands for their display. Your help would be hugely appreciated in either:

- sponsoring a 4 foot tree as an individual gift or as a donation from your company.
- providing a stand for a tree - old or new.

The trees can be artificial or real - the rules allow either. However, there is room too for more creative solutions, so if you have a child in Year 7, you could suggest a different design altogether and offer help in that way.

Thank you in advance; if you can help in any way, please contact [Mr Fox](#).

We hope you'll also be able to pop into the church to see the finished items in the run up to the festive season.

### Personal Development

We had a busy fortnight in terms of personal development, with lots of things going on outside of our classroom curriculum. We want the young people who come through our doors to be academics, yes, but also to be awesome, worldly-wise human beings who are ready to face the next step of their life when they leave our school. The enrichment opportunities that we offer to them are - we believe - equally as important as what happens in the classroom and we hope that as many of our students as possible take the opportunities that come their way and try out as much as they can whilst they're in our care.

### BBC Bitesize

We were incredibly lucky to be visited by BBC Bitesize at the beginning of October. A team from the BBC, including a presenter, rigged the hall up like a TV studio and interviewed a panel of local employers. As part of our careers programme in school, students in Y's 7, 9, 10 and 11 were able to hear about their experiences of school, their experiences of examinations and the pathways that they took to get to the jobs that they now have. It was a brilliant day all round, and it was especially great to see some of our students come back during the presentations to speak to the presenters and panellists to find out more! If you'd like more information or support with careers, please contact our careers advisor - Ms. Stirling - on [mstirling@stk.arette.uk](mailto:mstirling@stk.arette.uk)





## Music to our ears!



We are so thankful to our three local Co-op stores who have clubbed together to raise £550 for the school to enable us to buy recorders for every student in year 7!

This incredibly generous donation means that we are able to revamp our music independent work in Y7 and ensure that all students have access to a musical instrument and the opportunity to learn to play.

If you would like to know more about the music lessons that we offer at school - both through our curriculum and as additional peripatetic lessons - please don't hesitate to contact school and we'll put you in touch with the right person.

## Clubs and activities

Just a reminder that we have 40 clubs and activities on offer over the course of the week. If your child is yet to join in with a club, please encourage them to do so. The benefits are endless for young people, and - more than anything - it's an amazing way for them to meet and spend time with like minded people. If you missed our clubs booklet and timetable being shared, then we have included links to them below for ease.

[Clubs Booklet](#)

[Clubs Timetable](#)

Clubs and activities are coordinated by our Lead Practitioner for Personal Development, Mrs Fox. If you have any questions or comments or even suggestions, please feel free to get in touch with her at [efox@stk.arete.uk](mailto:efox@stk.arete.uk).

## House Assemblies

The last two weeks have seen our first round of house assemblies, with students in each of our 7 houses coming down to the main hall to get together for the first time and to celebrate the wonderful things that students have achieved since the start of term! Mr Burns and Mrs Fox have really enjoyed delivering the assemblies, and have noted in particular how nice it has been to see students in different year groups coming together and celebrating one another's' achievements.

Across the 7 assemblies, we've given out 378 Bronze certificates for students with 100 House Points, 22 Silver certificates for students with 200 House Points, and 46 of our extra-curricular pin badges. We have lots of house activities coming up over the next few weeks and heading into Christmas, and are really excited to see these get underway!





### Monologue evening - coming soon!

Rehearsals are well underway for Stokesley School's annual monologue evening. This year the audience will be treated to extracts from two plays 'Burying your Brother in the Pavement' by Jack Thorne (performed by Y9) and 'Two' by Jim Cartwright (performed by Y10). The evening will consist of acting, song and dance and will be marked as a GCSE mock exam. It's being held on Thursday 9th November, starting at 6pm and is a free event - we would love a large supportive audience so please come along to support our students!

### Photography competition

We have a photography competition underway in school at the moment. Students are invited to take a photograph on the theme of 'autumn' and to email this to [Mrs Fox](#) to be entered. Mrs Fox has loved looking at the entries that have come in so far and says that the standard is high! Final date for entries is 31st October 2023. Click [here](#) to see the competition poster.

### Restart a Heart

On Monday 16th October, all students in Y8 were taught the valuable skill of CPR as part of the British Heart Foundation's Restart a Heart Day. 6 local employees from the emergency services joined us for the day, and were incredibly impressed with the attention and focus of our Y8s as they learnt this life-saving skill.



### Operation Encompass/School and Police Liaison:

Trust between the local police and the public is essential within any community and we feel it is important that we do our part to support this process and to help make our students feel safe. We continue to work and liaise with the local police, PCSOs and School Community Police Officers on various projects within school to build relationships and raise awareness around different subjects. The police will often keep us up to date with issues in the community including any anti-social behaviour and where we feel further advice or education is required the police staff may visit school to do group or individual work with students.

Another part of our work with police is Operation Encompass. This is an initiative that enhances communication between the police and schools where a child is at risk from - or has experienced - domestic abuse. The purpose of the information sharing is to ensure schools can enhance their safeguarding of children: by knowing that the child has had this experience, the school is in a better position to understand and be supportive of the child's needs and possible behaviours. Operation Encompass will **complement existing**



safeguarding procedures. Schools are normally informed via email the following day after an incident has happened to allow them to support the child and families.

### CEOP/The Dark Web Explained:

CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre) works with safeguarding and child protection partners across the UK and overseas. It protects children from harm online and offline with a focus on child sexual exploitation and online protection issues. The Dark Web Explained is a new resource made available for professionals and parents and carers in response to research, which found that many professionals and parents and carers do not understand the Dark Web and feel unequipped to talk to a young person about it, should the need arise. Please follow [this link](#) for further information.

### Out and About

Thanks to some European funding from the Careers Department, a group of lucky Y9 students were able to enjoy a packed fun-filled day at Carlton Lodge Outward Bound Course. The day included archery, tree climbing, raft building and canoeing, which encouraged friendly competition and team working. Students thoroughly enjoyed their time out of school, demonstrating encouragement for each other as well as resilience, especially when jumping in cold water! They were accompanied by Ms. Stirling from Careers and the Head of Y9, Mr. Hamer, who were impressed by the students' attitude and proud to receive very positive feedback from the course leaders about the students' behaviour throughout the day.



### Royal Institution Masterclass Training

On Monday 23rd, we hosted training with all science and maths students in Y12, along with some students from Northallerton School, to develop their presentation and communication skills. This training was delivered by the [Royal Institution](#) as part of our Ogden Trust partnership.

During the afternoon, the students were taught how to develop and deliver a Masterclass workshop on a topic of their choice to primary students. The students then had the opportunity to deliver their workshop to primary students from our feeder primary schools. This was a unique and invaluable opportunity for our students to work with this prestigious charitable organisation who help people to discover and engage more with science. We were excited to have the opportunity to establish a working relationship with them to benefit both our students and the students in our wider community.





### Student Leaders Update

#### Sponsored Walk

On Friday 13th October, Student Leaders from Y7 and 9 embarked on their sponsored walk to raise funds for the final phase of our Place for Peace. Y13 Senior Student Leaders and volunteers along with Mrs Darbyshire, Mr Hamer and Mrs Dumphy-Brook supported the students on their journey. Despite the challenging weather, we walked for two hours and kept spirits high with singing and snacks.

Our Place for Peace is an area where we remember the students and staff who passed away whilst being part of our school community. It is an incredibly important project for us and will be a place where students will be able to sit, read and quietly chat with their friends. So far, student leaders have raised £10,000 which has enabled us to build the covered infrastructure and seating area. We are now raising money for the plants before our grand opening at Christmas. If you would like to find out more about the project, or would like to make a donation, please email Mrs Darbyshire on [jdarbyshire@stk.arete.uk](mailto:jdarbyshire@stk.arete.uk).



#### Formal Assessments

Students in Y13 are sitting their first set of formal assessments this week. Students have been issued with individual timetables and will sit these exams in the main hall.

Y11 Formal assessments will commence one week after the half term break, week commencing 13th November 2023 for two full school weeks. Students will be issued with the Y11 timetable prior to breaking up for half term.

If you have any queries regarding examinations, please contact:

- Mrs Herbert, Exams Officer for logistical queries on [jherbert@stk.arete.uk](mailto:jherbert@stk.arete.uk)
- Mrs McGreal, Assistant Headteacher and SENDCo for queries in relation to access arrangements on [smcgreal@stk.arete.uk](mailto:smcgreal@stk.arete.uk)
- Mrs Darbyshire, Deputy Headteacher for any general queries around academic achievement or examinations on [jdarbyshire@stk.arete.uk](mailto:jdarbyshire@stk.arete.uk)



### Y7 Student Leader Appointments

We are very proud that over the last four years, our student leader body has grown to have representatives in all year groups, including student leaders, prefects, senior prefects, senior student leaders and house captains. The team raises funds for charity, runs and supports trips and enrichment activities, representing the school in school and in the wider community. They also have supported us to shape policy through the sustainability group and anti-bullying ambassadors. Mrs Darbyshire and Mrs Dumphy- Brook were overwhelmed by Y7 applications to join this successful body. Forty-five students in Y7 have now been awarded with their student leader badge.



### Autism Central

Autism Central offers free, high-quality and accessible information, support, signposting and coaching about Autism for family members, carers and personal assistants of autistic children and adults. We also provide a variety of group and individual sessions both online and in person.

The programme has been commissioned by NHS England's Workforce, Training and Education Team and is being delivered by nine not-for-profit organisations across the country: Daisy Chain are the Regional Hub for North East and Yorkshire.

Meg Pickard is the Yorkshire coordinator for Autism Central - based near Richmond and working with families, schools and organisations across the region.

Families can self-refer to the service via the website: parents and carers may find the service useful.

[Autism Central - Daisy Chain](#)





## Dates for your diary

Friday 27 <sup>th</sup> October	School breaks up for October Half Term
Monday 6th November	School starts after half term
Thursday 9th November	Monologue Evening: 6 - 9.00pm
Monday 13th - Friday 24th Nov	Y11 Formal Assessments
Friday 17th November	Student Leader Fundraising Day for Children in Need
Friday 1st December	Training Day (no students in school)
Thursday 7th December	Y13 Parents' Evening: 3.30-6.30pm
Friday 8th December	Student Leader fundraising - Christmas Jumper Day
Monday 11th December	Y11 Parents' Evening: 3.30 - 6.30pm
Monday 18th December	Foodbank Collection (all week)
Tuesday 19th December	Christmas Show: 7.00pm
Friday 22nd December	School breaks up for Christmas

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Yours faithfully,

**Mr M Fenwick**  
Headteacher